

To: Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
RE: Nomination to the Judicial Review Council,
Statement of Sandra Sosnoff Baird, February 25, 2010

Good afternoon, Senator Looney, Representative Janowski, and other distinguished members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. My name is Sandra Sosnoff Baird and I am honored to be nominated by Governor Rell as an alternate member to the Judicial Review Council. I previously served on the Judicial Review Council from 2001 to 2007, and have respect and confidence in that process.

I would like to tell you about myself and my background. It has been my honor to serve as a Family Support Magistrate since August 1995. In February, 2008, the Chief Court Administrator, Judge Barbara Quinn, named me as the Chief Family Support Magistrate.

I am presently assigned to the Fairfield Judicial District at Bridgeport and the New Haven Judicial District. Because there are only nine Family Support Magistrates, plus three Magistrate referees, we have the opportunity to be assigned throughout Connecticut. Since my appointment I have presided in every judicial district where we have a family support magistrate session, except for Putnam. Besides Fairfield and New Haven, I have been assigned to: Meriden, Derby, Hartford, New Britain, Norwich and Willimantic. I have also presided on a temporary basis to cover the absence of other magistrates in the Litchfield, Tolland, Danbury and Stamford Judicial Districts.

As a Family Support Magistrate, I have conducted trials, authored numerous decisions on issues of law, and gained a working knowledge of case management and judicial efficiency. The number of cases heard on a docket varies; usually the number is between 30 and 60 each day. Most of these cases involve self represented parties which makes it even more important to explain the process and to ensure that all participants are treated fairly and with respect. I understand that magistrates decide issues affecting the most important part of a person's life and that our decisions have a tremendous impact on people. Those issues include establishing support and paternity and enforcing support orders.

Prior to my appointment as a magistrate, I was engaged in the private practice of law (including family law), served as a staff counsel for the Connecticut General Assembly's House Democrats, and also served as the Corporation Counsel for the city of New Haven. I am a graduate of New York University School of Law, received a Masters in Public Administration from the

Maxwell School of Syracuse University, and a Bachelor's degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I appreciate the Committee's consideration of my nomination and I would be pleased to answer any questions.